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TRANSGENDER

SURVEY

Report on the  
Experiences of  
Latino/a Respondents





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## Introduction

**T**he 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey (USTS) is the largest survey examining the experiences of transgender people in the United States, with 27,715 respondents nationwide. The USTS was conducted by the National Center for Transgender Equality in the summer of 2015 and was offered online in English and Spanish. The results provide a detailed look at the experiences of transgender people across a wide range of categories, such as education, employment, family life, health, housing, and interactions with the criminal justice system.

*The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey* documented the experiences of USTS respondents, including differences based on demographic and other characteristics.<sup>1</sup> Among the most important findings was that many respondents were impacted by the compounding effects of multiple forms of discrimination, and

transgender people of color who completed the survey experienced deeper and broader forms of discrimination than white USTS respondents and people in the U.S. population overall.

This report focuses on the unique experiences of the 1,473 USTS respondents who identified as Latino/a or Hispanic,<sup>2</sup> highlighting disparities between the experiences of Latino/a transgender people, other USTS respondents, and the U.S. population.<sup>3</sup> While the findings in this report reflect a range of Latino/a transgender people in the United States, the survey likely did not fully capture the experiences of those who were most affected by factors that may limit access to online surveys, such as factors related to language, education, economic and housing stability, and disabilities. All findings in this report are presented as weighted percentages.<sup>4</sup>

# Key Findings

- **21% of Latino/a respondents were unemployed**, three times the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (7%).
- **43% of Latino/a respondents were living in poverty**, compared to 18% of Latino/a people in the U.S. population.
- **31% of Latino/a respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives and 14% experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender.**
- **48% of Latino/a respondents have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetimes and 12% of Latino/a respondents were sexually assaulted in the past year.**
- **59% of Latino/a respondents said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable asking**

- the police for help**, compared to 53% of white respondents in the USTS sample.
- **32% of Latino/a respondents who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender**, such as being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.
- **1.6% of Latino/a respondents were living with HIV**, more than five times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%).
- **45% of Latino/a respondents experienced serious psychological distress in the month before completing the survey** (based on the Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale), nine times the rate in the U.S. population (5%).

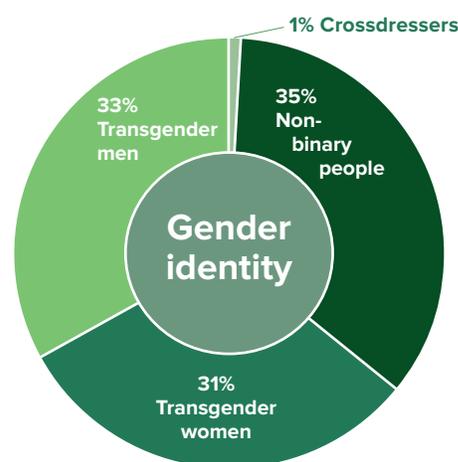
# Portrait of Latino/a Respondents

This section outlines aspects of Latino/a respondents' identities and demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, geographic location, and educational attainment, to provide important context for their experiences.

## Gender Identity

Thirty-five percent (35%) of Latino/a respondents were non-binary,<sup>5</sup> 33% were transgender men, 31% were transgender women, and 1% identified as crossdressers<sup>6</sup> (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Gender identity



## Experiences with Transitioning

Sixty-one percent (61%) of Latino/a respondents were currently living full time in a gender that was different from the one on their original birth certificates, referred to in this report as having transitioned. This included 72% of transgender men and women and 42% of non-binary respondents. More than one in five (21%) respondents who had transitioned did so before the age of 18, nearly half (47%) transitioned between the ages of 18 and 24, 22% transitioned between ages 25 and 34, and 11% transitioned at age 35 or older.

Respondents were asked how much time had passed since they began transitioning. Nearly one-third (29%) began their transition within one year of taking the survey, 38% transitioned 2 to 5 years prior, 15% transitioned 6 to 9 years prior, and 18% transitioned 10 or more years prior.

## Outness

Respondents were asked whether different groups of people in their lives knew that they were transgender to determine if they were “out” about their transgender identity to family members, friends, supervisors and coworkers, classmates, and health care providers. Specifically, they were asked whether all, most, some, or none of the people in each of those groups knew they were transgender.

Results for outness to any particular group reflect only those respondents who had people from that group in their lives. Overall, 7% reported that they were out to all of the people in their lives, across all groups of people, 44% were out to most, 46% were out to some, and 2% were out to none of the people in their lives.

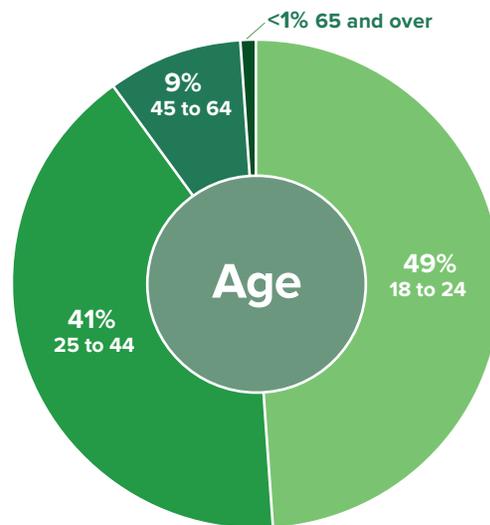
Sixty percent (60%) of respondents were out to all or most of the immediate family that they grew up with, and 36% were out to all or most of their extended family. Respondents were less likely to

be out to at work or school: approximately one-half reported that none of their current supervisors (50%) or coworkers (42%) knew that they were transgender, and 51% reported that none of their classmates at their current school knew they were transgender.

## Age

Most respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24 (49%) or 25 and 44 (41%) (Figure 2).

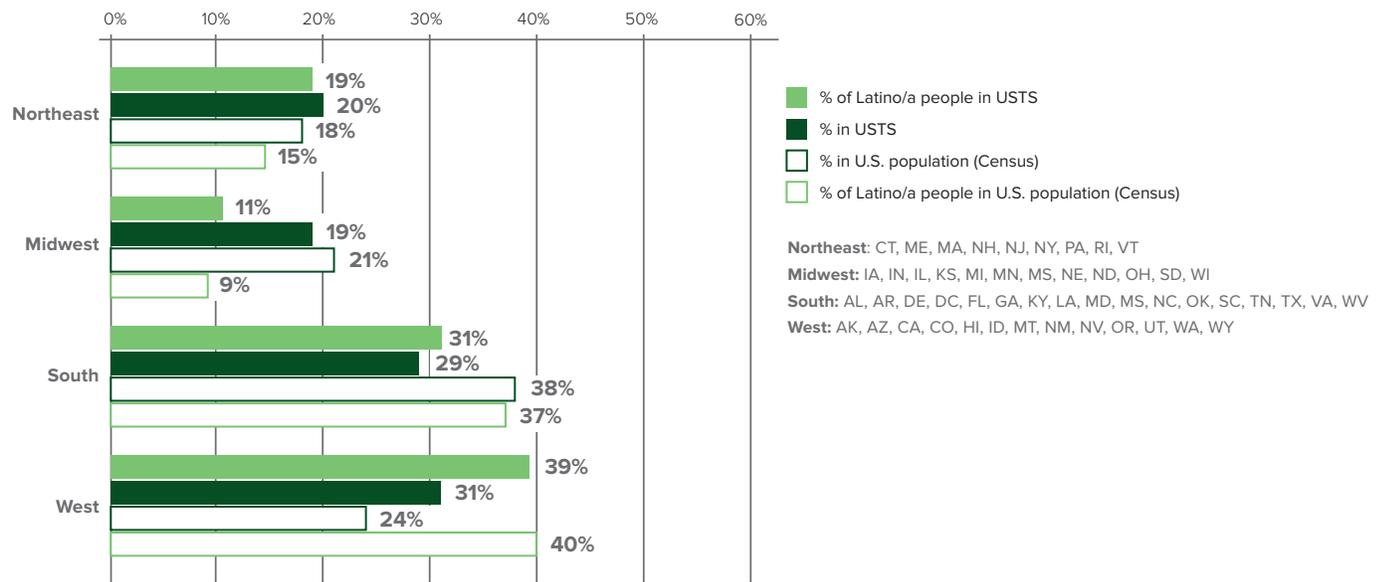
**Figure 2: Age**



## Location

Respondents lived in 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The geographical distribution of USTS Latino/a respondents differed from the distribution in the USTS sample overall but was generally similar to the distribution of Latino/a people in the U.S. population. Latino/a respondents were more likely to live in the West (39%) than respondents in the USTS sample overall (31%), similar to the trend in the U.S. population, where Latino/a people were more likely to live in the West (40%) than the U.S. population overall (24%)<sup>7</sup> (Figure 3).

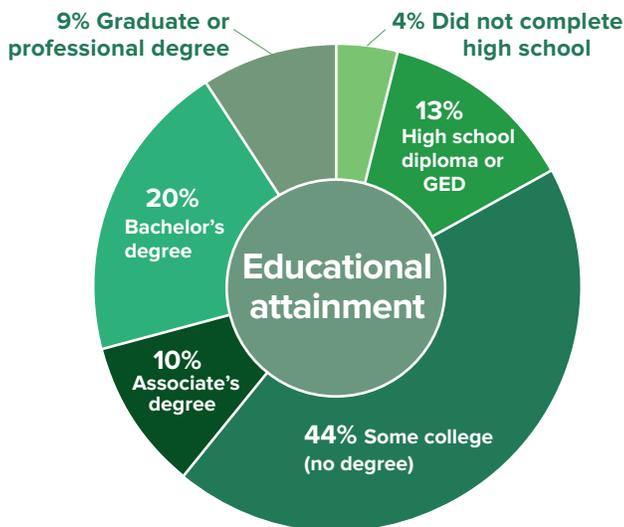
**Figure 3: Location by region**



## Educational Attainment

Respondents were asked about the highest level of education that they had completed. Seventeen percent (17%) had a high school diploma or GED or did not complete high school. Forty-four percent (44%) had completed some college but had not obtained a degree, and 29% had received a bachelor’s degree or a higher degree (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Educational attainment**



## Disability

Respondents received questions about their disability status based on questions from the American Community Survey (ACS) in order to compare the USTS sample to the U.S. population. Disabilities listed in the ACS included (1) being deaf or having serious difficulty hearing, (2) being blind or having serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses, (3) having serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, (4) having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs, (5) having difficulty dressing or bathing, and (6) having difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Forty percent (40%) of Latino/a respondents indicated that they had one or more disabilities listed in the ACS, similar to the rate in the USTS sample overall (39%). In contrast, only 15% in the U.S. population had a disability listed in the ACS.<sup>8</sup>

Respondents were also asked if they identified as a person with a disability to better capture disabilities that were not included in the ACS. One in four (25%)

Latino/a respondents identified as people with disabilities, compared to 28% in the USTS sample overall. The term “people with disabilities” used in this report refers to respondents who identified as people with disabilities.

## Relationship Status

Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents were living with a partner, 20% were partnered and living separately, 51% were single, 1% were in a polyamorous relationship, and 1% had a relationship status that was not listed. Respondents were asked about their current legal marital status for the purpose of comparison to the U.S. population. Fourteen percent (14%) of Latino/a respondents were currently married, in contrast to 46% of Latino/a people in the U.S. population.<sup>9</sup> Eighty-one percent (81%) of respondents had never been married, which is nearly twice the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (42%).

## Sexual Orientation

Respondents were asked which terms best described their sexual orientation. Respondents were most likely to identify as queer (21%), straight (19%), or pansexual (19%). They also identified as gay, lesbian, or same-gender-loving (13%), bisexual (13%), and asexual (11%).

## Citizenship and Immigration Status

Respondents were asked about their citizenship or immigration status. Ninety-two percent (92%) of Latino/a respondents were citizens, including 7% who were naturalized citizens. Latino/a respondents also reported a range of immigration statuses, including being permanent residents (3%), undocumented residents (2%), Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients (1%), and visa holders (1%).

# Family Life and Faith Communities

## Family Life

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents were out as transgender to a current or former partner. Of those who were out to a current or former partner, 24% had a partner end their relationship solely or partly because they were transgender, including 10% who had a partner end their relationship solely because they were transgender. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents who had children were out to one or more of their children, and 15% of those respondents had a child stop speaking to them or spending time with them after coming out as transgender.

Sixty percent (60%) of respondents who were out to at least some of the immediate family they grew up with reported that their family was generally supportive, 19% had unsupportive families, and 21% had families that were neither supportive nor unsupportive. Nearly one-half (49%) experienced at least one form of family rejection outlined in the survey, such as having a family member who stopped speaking to them for a long time or ended the relationship, experiencing violence by a family member, or being kicked out of the house for being transgender (Table 1).

**Table 1: Forms of family rejection**

(of those out to immediate family)	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS
Stopped speaking to them or ended relationship	28%	26%
Did not allow them to wear clothes that matched gender	32%	27%
Sent them to a professional to stop them from being transgender	16%	14%
Were violent towards them	12%	10%
Kicked them out of the house	11%	8%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>44%</b>

Transgender women (37%) were more likely to have an immediate family member stop speaking to them for a long time or end a relationship because they were transgender, compared to transgender men (30%) and non-binary people (14%). Transgender women (16%) were more likely to experience violence by a family member because they were transgender than non-binary people (13%) and transgender men (10%). Transgender women (15%) were also more likely to have been kicked out of the house than transgender men (10%) and non-binary people (6%).

Additionally, 12% of those who were out to their immediate family ran away from home because they were transgender, with transgender women (17%) being more likely to have run away than transgender men (10%) and non-binary people (10%).

Although approximately half of those who were out to their immediate family reported at least one experience of rejection from a family member, 81% reported that at least one immediate family member supported them through one or more specific acts, such as using their preferred name or pronouns, giving them money to support their transition, or helping them to change the name or gender on an identity document (Table 2).

**Table 2: Supportive family behaviors**

(of those out to immediate family)	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS
Told respondent they respect or support them	66%	65%
Used their preferred name	56%	58%
Used the correct pronouns	54%	55%
Stood up for them with family, friends, or others	38%	36%
Did research to learn how to best support them	29%	33%
Gave money to help with gender transition	19%	18%
Helped them change their name and/or gender on an identity document	11%	10%
Supported them in another way	10%	11%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>82%</b>

## Faith Communities

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of Latino/a respondents had been part of a spiritual or religious community (“faith community”) at some point in their lives. Of these, more than one in five (21%) left a faith community because they were rejected as a transgender person. That experience was more likely among transgender women (33%) than transgender men (22%) and non-binary people (13%). Thirty-seven percent (37%) of those who had been rejected by a faith community found a new faith community that welcomed them as a transgender person.

More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents who had ever been part of a faith community were part of one in the year prior to taking the survey. These respondents reported a range of experiences within their faith communities. Ninety-seven percent (97%) experienced one or more accepting behaviors from members of their faith community, such as having a community leader or member who accepted them or made them feel welcome as a transgender person or being told that their religion or faith accepts them as a transgender

person. However, 20% had one or more experiences of rejection, such as being asked to stop coming to services or faith community

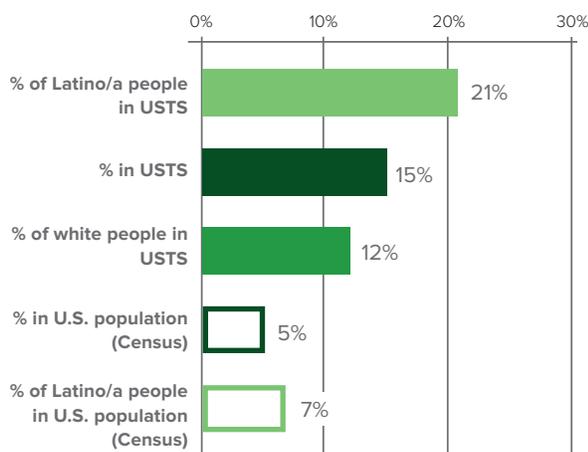
functions or having a community member tell them that being transgender is a sin or that their religion does not approve of them.<sup>10</sup>

## Income and Employment

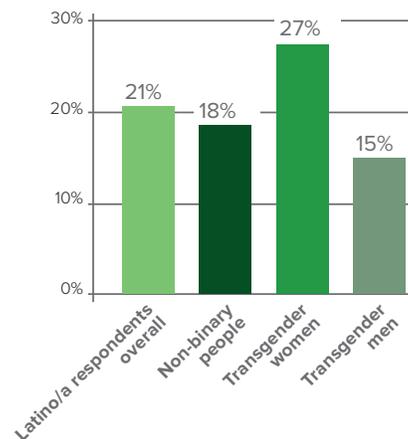
### Unemployment

More than one in five (21%) Latino/a respondents were unemployed, compared to 15% in the USTS sample overall. The unemployment rate among Latino/a respondents was more than four times higher than the unemployment rate in the U.S. population overall (5%)<sup>11</sup> and three times the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (7%) (Figure 5).<sup>12</sup> The unemployment rate differed by gender, with transgender Latinas (27%) being more likely to be unemployed (Figure 6). Respondents with disabilities (27%) were also more likely to be unemployed.

**Figure 5: Unemployment**



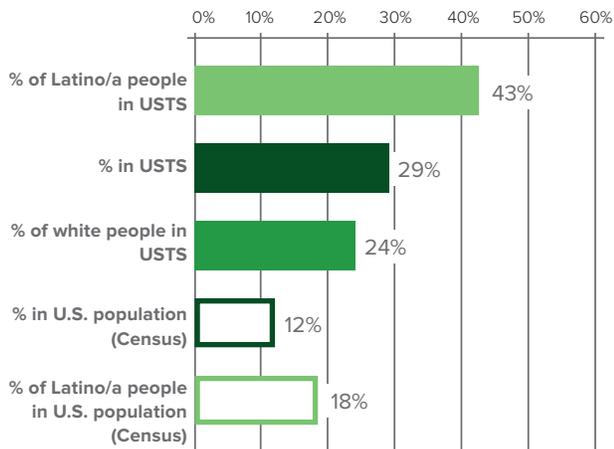
**Figure 6: Unemployment (by gender)**



### Poverty

More than four out of ten (43%) Latino/a respondents were living in poverty,<sup>13</sup> compared to 29% in the USTS sample overall. This was substantially higher than the poverty rate in the U.S. population overall (12%)<sup>14</sup> and the poverty rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (18%) (Figure 7).<sup>15</sup> The poverty rate was higher among transgender women (45%) and non-binary people (43%) than among transgender men (36%).

**Figure 7: Living in poverty**



### Sources of Income

Latino/a respondents' most common source of income was from their own employment or a partner's employment alone (40%), compared to those in the USTS sample overall (36%). More than one-third (35%) of Latino/a respondents reported that they received income from multiple sources, in contrast to 45% in the USTS sample overall. One in ten (10%) Latino/a respondents reported that their sole source of income was Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability benefits, compared to 9% in the USTS sample overall (Table 3).

**Table 3: Current sources of income**

Sources of income	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS
Employment only (from their own employment, partner's employment, or self-employment)	40%	36%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disability benefits only	10%	9%
Pension or retirement income only	3%	3%
Unemployment benefits or public cash assistance program only	2%	1%
Pay from sex work, drug sales, or other work that is currently criminalized only	2%	1%
Other sources only	6%	3%
No income	2%	2%
Multiple sources	35%	45%

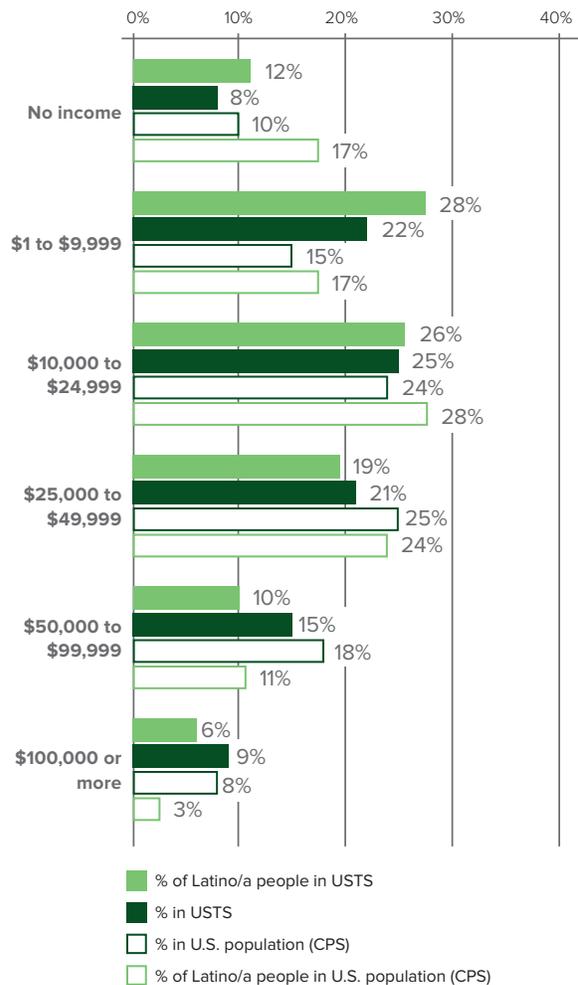
### Military Service

Seven percent (7%) of Latino/a respondents have served in the military, including respondents who were currently serving in the military on active duty (<1%) and those who were currently on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard (1%). Six percent (6%) of respondents were veterans, similar to the rate in the U.S. population overall (8%), but higher than the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (3%).<sup>16</sup>

### Individual and Household Income

Respondents reported their annual individual and household income levels from 2014, the last full year prior to completing the survey. More than one-quarter (28%) of Latino/a respondents reported an *individual income* of \$1 to \$9,999, compared to 22% in the USTS sample overall.

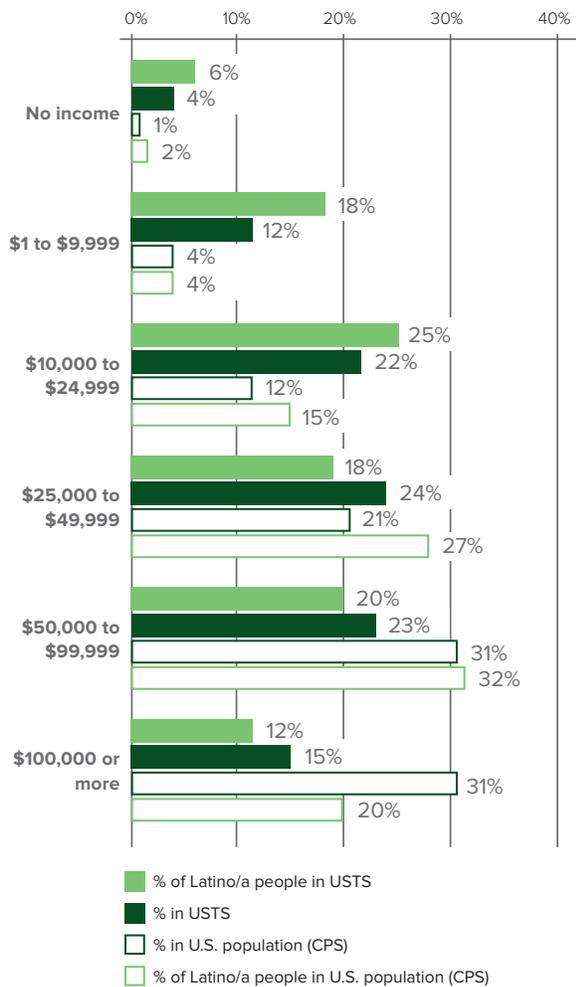
**Figure 8: Annual individual income (2014)**



Latino/a respondents were also substantially more likely to report this low individual income than Latino/a people in the U.S. population (17%)<sup>17</sup> (Figure 8).

Nearly one in five (18%) Latino/a respondents reported a *household income* of \$1 to \$9,999, compared to 12% in the USTS sample overall, and nearly five times the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (4%) (Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Annual household income (2014)**



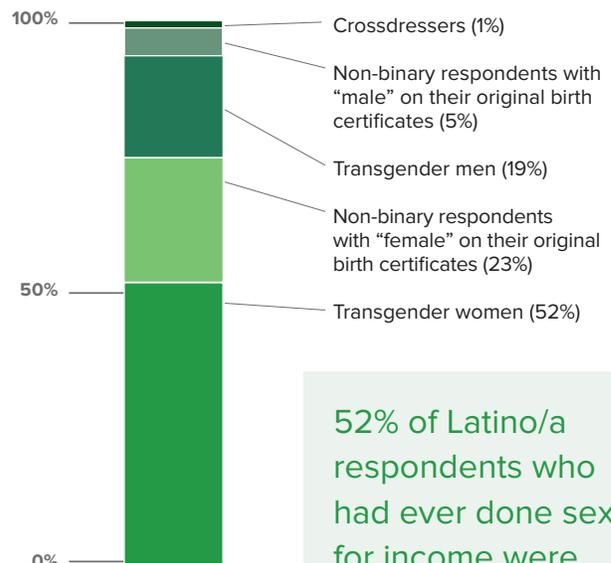
## Sex Work and Other Underground Economy Work

Nearly one-quarter (22%) of Latino/a respondents have participated in the underground economy for income at some point in their lives, including in sex

work, drug sales, and other currently criminalized work, similarly to 20% in the USTS sample overall. One in ten (10%) Latino/a respondents participated in the underground economy for income in the past year.

Thirteen percent (13%) of Latino/a respondents participated in sex work for income, compared to 12% in the USTS sample overall and 9% of white respondents. Examining the composition of those who have done sex work, transgender women represent more than one-half (52%) of Latino/a respondents who have done sex work for money in their lifetimes. Although Latinas represent a disproportionately high percentage of those who have done sex work, it is also important to recognize that non-binary people with “female” on their original birth certificates and transgender men account for a large proportion of those who have done sex work. Non-binary people with “female” on their original birth certificates represent nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents who have done sex work for money in their lifetimes, and transgender men represent 19% (Figure 10).

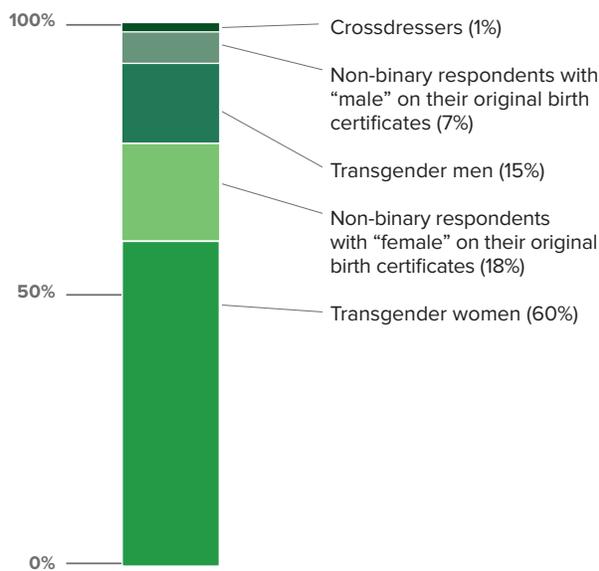
**Figure 10: Gender identity of those who have done sex work for income in their lifetimes**



52% of Latino/a respondents who had ever done sex for income were transgender women.

Six percent (6%) of Latino/a respondents participated in sex work for income in the past year. Examining the makeup of those who did sex work for income in the past year, transgender women represent more than one-half (60%), 18% were non-binary people with “female” on their original birth certificates, and 15% were transgender men (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Gender identity of those who have done sex work for income in the past year**



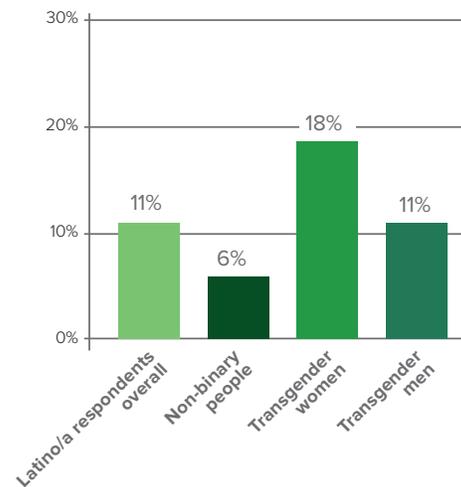
One in five (20%) respondents participated in sex work for money, food, a place to sleep, or other goods or services, compared to 19% in the USTS sample overall and 16% of white respondents.

Survey respondents were asked if they had ever interacted with police either while doing sex work or when police thought they were doing sex work. Of Latino/a respondents who had interacted with the police while doing or thought to be doing sex work, 84% reported some form of police harassment, abuse, or mistreatment, including being verbally harassed, physically attacked, or sexually assaulted by police, compared to 86% in the USTS sample overall and 82% of white respondents.

## Experiences in the Workplace

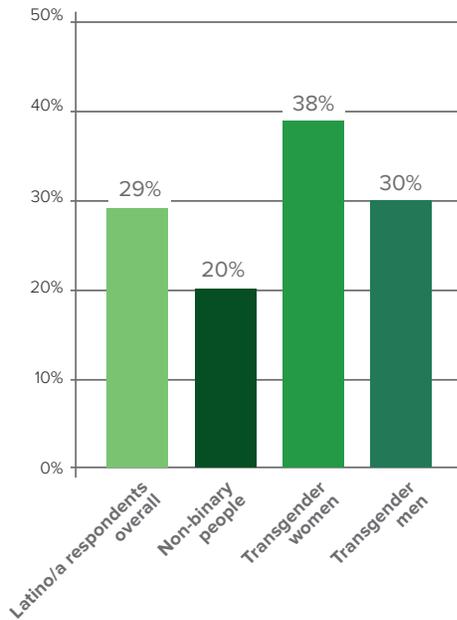
Fifteen percent (15%) of Latino/a respondents who have ever been employed reported losing a job at some point in their lives because of being transgender. This represents 11% of all Latino/a respondents, compared to 13% all respondents in the USTS. Transgender women (18%) were more likely to report being fired because of being transgender (Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Ever lost job because of being transgender (by gender)**



In the past year, 29% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for because of being transgender, compared to 27% in the USTS sample overall. Transgender women (38%) were more likely to report this experience than transgender men (30%) and non-binary people (20%) (Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Fired, denied promotion, and/or not hired in the past year because of being transgender (by gender)**



Many respondents who had a job in the past year reported that they had been verbally harassed (14%), physically attacked (1%), and sexually assaulted (2%) at work during that year because of being transgender. More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents who were employed reported other forms of mistreatment based on their gender identity or expression during the past year, such as being forced to use a restroom that did not match their gender identity, being told to present in the wrong gender in order to keep their job, or having a boss or coworker share information about their transgender status with others without their permission.

## Education

**N**early three-quarters (74%) of Latino/a respondents who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 (K–12) experienced mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed, prohibited from dressing according to their gender identity, disciplined more harshly, or physically or sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender. More than half (52%) of those

who were out or perceived as transgender in K–12 were verbally harassed, 24% were physically attacked, and 16% were sexually assaulted in K–12 because of being transgender. Sixteen percent (16%) faced such severe mistreatment as a transgender person that they left a K–12 school, and 7% were expelled from school (Table 4).

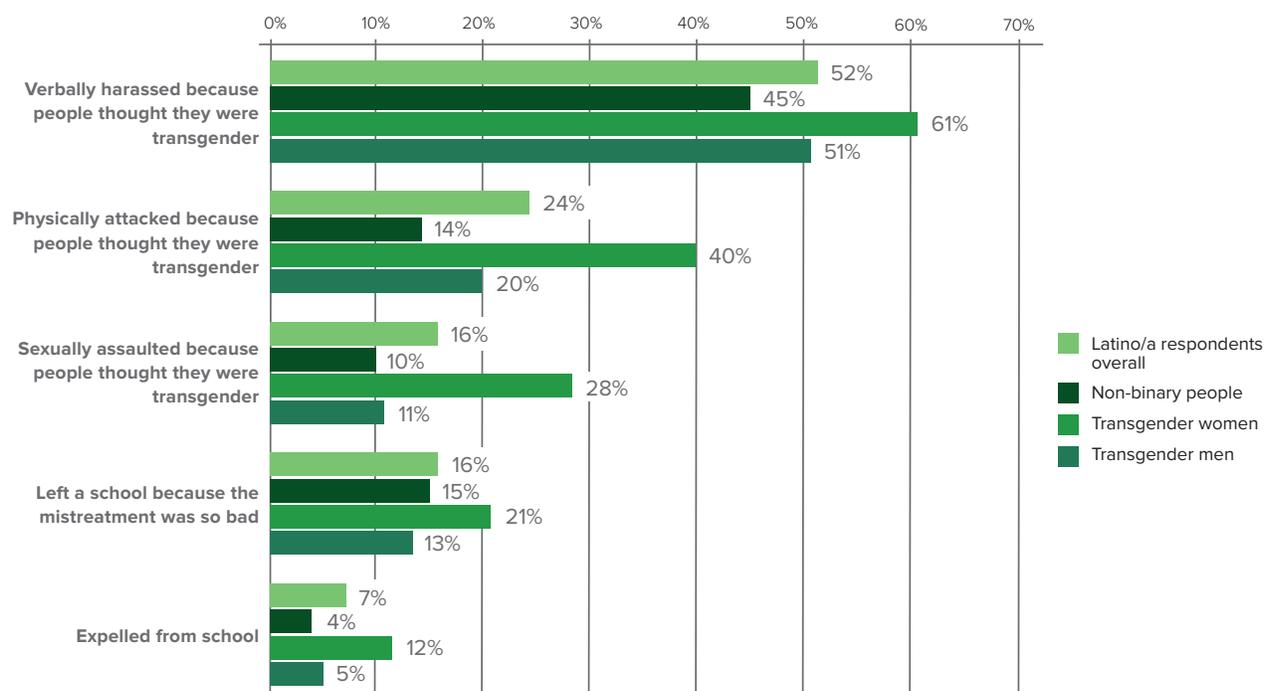
**Table 4: Experiences of people who were out as transgender in K–12 or believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender**

Negative experiences in school (out of those who were out or perceived as transgender)	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS
Not allowed to dress in a way that fit their gender identity or expression	55%	52%
Verbally harassed because people thought they were transgender	52%	54%
Disciplined for fighting back against bullies	35%	36%
Physically attacked because people thought they were transgender	24%	24%
Believe they were disciplined more harshly because teachers or staff thought they were transgender	24%	20%
Left a school because the mistreatment was so bad	16%	17%
Sexually assaulted because people thought they were transgender	16%	13%
Expelled from school	7%	6%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>77%</b>

Transgender women were more likely to have been verbally harassed (61%), physically attacked (40%), and sexually assaulted (28%) because people thought they were transgender in K–12. Transgender women were also more likely to have left a school because of mistreatment (21%) and to have been expelled from school (12%) (Figure 14).

Latino/a respondents also reported high levels of mistreatment in post-secondary schools. Nearly one-quarter (23%) of those who were out or perceived as transgender in college or vocational school were verbally, physically, or sexually harassed because of being transgender.

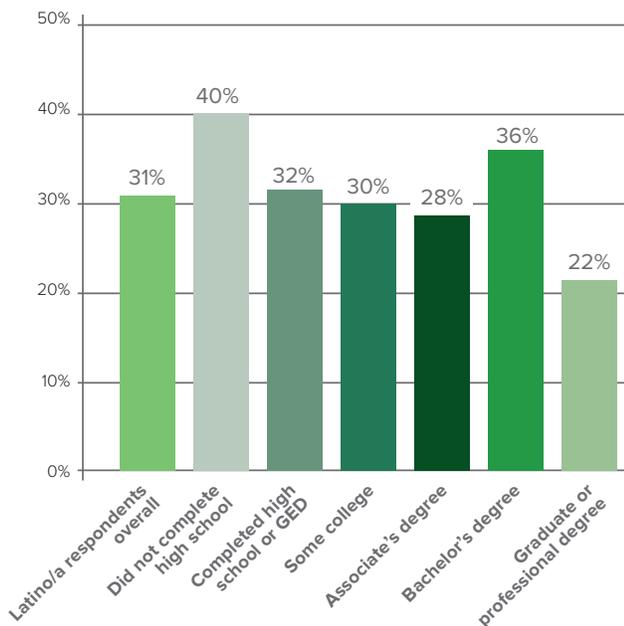
**Figure 14: Experiences of people who were out as transgender in K–12 or believed classmates, teachers, or school staff thought they were transgender (by gender)**



# Housing, Homelessness, and Shelter Access

**N**early one-third (31%) of Latino/a respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. The rate of homelessness differed by educational attainment, with respondents who did not complete high school (40%) being more likely to have experienced homelessness (Figure 15). People with disabilities (39%) were also more likely to have experienced homelessness in their lifetimes.

**Figure 15: Lifetime homelessness rate (by educational attainment)**



In the past year, one-third (33%) of respondents experienced some form of housing discrimination or instability, such as being evicted from their home or denied a home or apartment because of being transgender.<sup>18</sup> Fourteen percent (14%) experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender, 6% were denied a home or apartment, and 6% were evicted because of being transgender (Table 5).

**Table 5: Housing situations that occurred in the past year because of being transgender**

Housing situation (out of those to whom situation applied)	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS
Had to move back in with family or friends	23%	20%
Slept in different places for short periods of time	17%	15%
Had to move into a less expensive home or apartment	16%	13%
Experienced homelessness	14%	12%
Denied a home or apartment	6%	6%
Evicted from a home or apartment	6%	5%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>30%</b>

More than one in five (22%) respondents who experienced homelessness in the past year avoided staying in a shelter because they feared being mistreated as a transgender person.

# Public Accommodations

Respondents reported being denied equal treatment or service, verbally harassed, or physically attacked at many places of public accommodation—places that provide services to the public, like retail stores, hotels, and government offices. In the past year, out of respondents who visited a place of public accommodation where staff or employees thought or knew they were transgender, 30% experienced at least one type of mistreatment. This included 15% who were denied equal treatment or service, 23% who were verbally harassed, and 1% who were physically attacked because of being transgender (Table 6).

Transgender women (21%) were more likely to have been denied equal treatment or service compared to transgender men (11%) and non-

binary people (12%). Transgender women (27%) and non-binary people (26%) were more likely to have experienced verbal harassment than transgender men (17%).

**Table 6: Experiences in places of public accommodation in the past year due to being transgender**

Experience at a place of public accommodation (out of those who believe staff knew or thought they were transgender)	% of Latino/a people in USTS
Denied equal treatment or service	15%
Verbally harassed	23%
Physically attacked	1%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>30%</b>

# Harassment and Violence

## Overall Experiences of Unequal Treatment, Harassment, and Physical Attack

Nearly one-half (48%) of respondents reported being denied equal treatment, verbally harassed, and/or physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender. Fifteen percent (15%) were denied equal treatment or service in a public place and 45% were verbally harassed in the past year because of being transgender. Nearly one in ten (9%) were physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender (Table 7).

Transgender women (49%) and non-binary people (48%) were more likely to be verbally harassed in

the past year because of being transgender than transgender men (40%). Transgender women (12%) and non-binary people (10%) were also more likely to be physically attacked in the past year because of being transgender, compared to transgender men (7%).

**Table 7: Denial of equal treatment or service, verbal harassment, and physical attack in the past year because of being transgender**

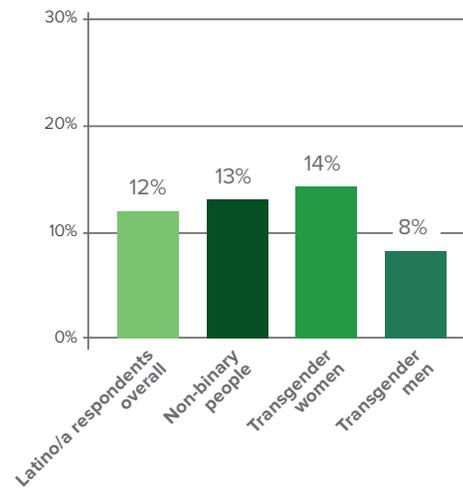
Experience in the past year due to being transgender	% of Latino/a people in USTS
Denied equal treatment or service	15%
Verbally harassed	45%
Physically attacked	9%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>48%</b>

## Sexual Assault

Nearly half (48%) of Latino/a respondents have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lifetimes, compared to 47% in the USTS sample overall and 45% of white respondents. People with disabilities (60%) reported a substantially higher rate of sexual assault in their lifetimes. Non-binary people with “female” on their original birth certificates (55%) were also more likely to have been sexually assaulted in their lifetimes (Figure 16).

Twelve percent (12%) of Latino/a respondents were sexually assaulted in the past year, compared to 10% in the USTS sample overall and 9% of white respondents. Transgender women (14%) and non-binary people (13%) were nearly twice as likely to have been sexually assaulted in the past year as transgender men (8%) (Figure 17). More than one-quarter (28%) of respondents who worked in the underground economy (such as in sex work, drug sales, and other currently criminalized activities) in the past year were sexually assaulted during that year.

**Figure 17: Sexual assault in the past year (by gender)**



## Intimate Partner Violence

Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents experienced some form of intimate partner violence, including acts of coercive control<sup>19</sup> and physical violence. Transgender men (58%) were more likely to have experienced some form of

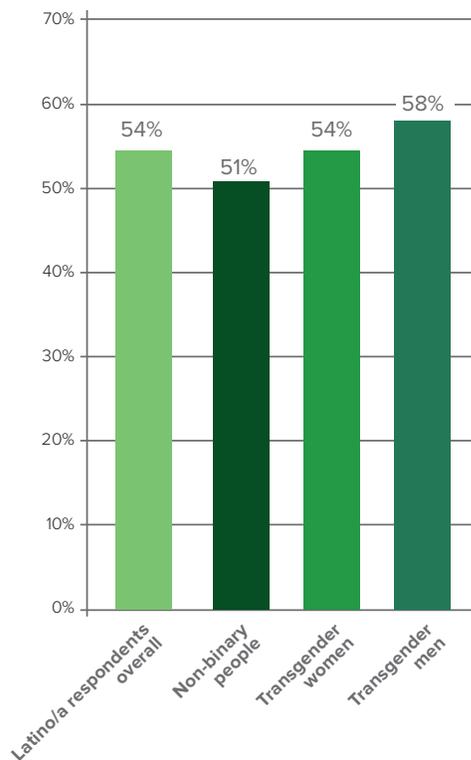
**Figure 16: Sexual assault in lifetime (by gender)**



intimate partner violence (Figure 18). Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents who have worked in the underground economy experienced intimate partner violence, and people with disabilities (62%) were also more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence.

More than one-quarter (27%) of respondents reported acts of coercive control by an intimate partner related to their transgender status, including being told that they were not a “real” woman or man, threatened with being “outed” by having their transgender status revealed to others, or prevented from taking their hormones. Forty-three percent (43%) experienced physical violence by an intimate partner.

**Figure 18: Experienced intimate partner violence (by gender)**



## Police Interactions, Prisons, and Immigration Detention

**L**atino/a respondents experienced high levels of mistreatment and harassment by police. In the past year, out of respondents who interacted with police or other law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender, 66% experienced some

form of mistreatment, compared to 58% of USTS respondents overall and 55% of white respondents. This included being verbally harassed, repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, or physically or sexually assaulted (Table 8).

**Table 8: Mistreatment by police or other law enforcement officers in past year**

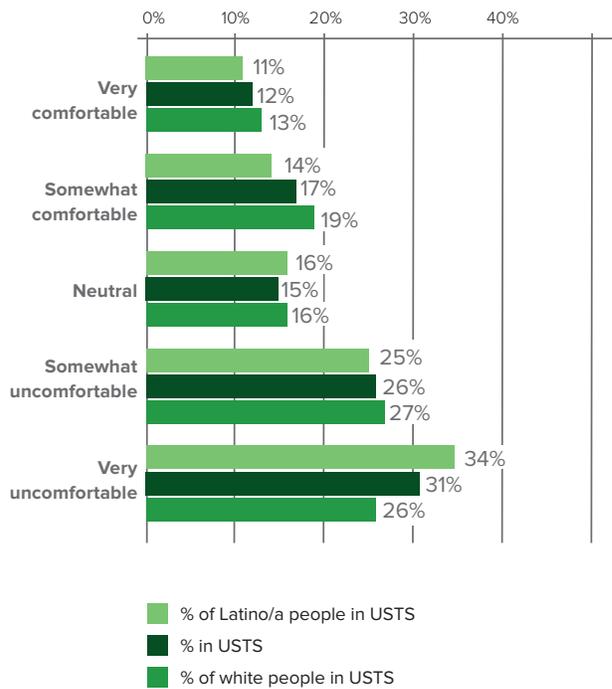
Experience of mistreatment in the past year	% of Latino/a people in USTS		% of white people in USTS
	% in USTS	% in USTS	% in USTS
Officers kept using the wrong gender pronouns (such as he/him or she/her) or wrong title (such as Mr. or Ms.)	55%	49%	46%
Verbally harassed by officers	29%	20%	17%
Officers asked questions about gender transition (such as about hormones or surgical status)	26%	19%	16%
Officers assumed they were sex workers	14%	11%	8%
Physically attacked by officers	5%	4%	2%
Sexually assaulted by officers	5%	3%	2%
Forced by officers to engage in sexual activity to avoid arrest	1%	1%	<1%
<b>One or more experiences listed</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>55%</b>

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Latino/a respondents said they would feel somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help if they needed it, compared to 57% of respondents in the USTS sample overall and 53% of white USTS respondents (Figure 19). Non-binary people (73%) were more likely to be uncomfortable asking the police for help, in contrast to transgender men (55%) and women (52%) (Figure 20). Nearly three-quarters (73%) of people with disabilities were uncomfortable asking the police for help.

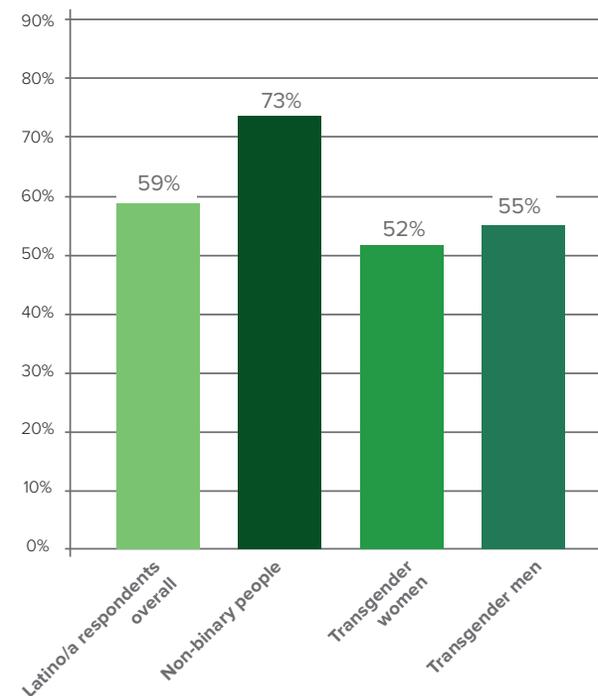
Four percent (4%) of Latino/a respondents were arrested in the past year, compared to 2% in the USTS sample. Two percent (2%) of Latino/a respondents were incarcerated—held in jail, prison, or juvenile detention—in the past year, compared to 0.9% in the U.S. population overall.<sup>20</sup>

Latino/a respondents who were held in jail, prison, or juvenile detention in the past year faced high rates of physical and sexual assault by facility

**Figure 19: Comfort asking the police for help**



**Figure 20: Somewhat or very uncomfortable asking the police for help (by gender)**



staff and other inmates. In the past year, 18% were physically assaulted by *staff or other inmates*, compared to 23% in the USTS sample overall. More than one-quarter (27%) were sexually assaulted by *staff or other inmates*, compared to 20% in the USTS sample overall.

Fourteen percent (14%) of Latino/a respondents were sexually assaulted by *facility staff* in the past year during their time in jail, prison, or juvenile detention, compared to the rate in the USTS

sample overall (11%). This was seven times higher than the rate in the incarcerated U.S. population in prisons (2%) and in jails (2%).<sup>21</sup>

Additionally, five percent (5%) of Latino/a respondents who were not U.S. citizens at the time of their birth have been held in immigration detention, such as in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center or a local jail just for immigration court proceedings. This represents 1% of all Latino/a respondents.

## Health

### Insurance

Seventeen percent (17%) of Latino/a respondents did not have health insurance, compared to 14% in the USTS sample overall and 12% of white respondents. This was higher than the rate in U.S. population overall (11%) but lower than the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (25%).<sup>22</sup> The most common forms of insurance reported by Latino/a respondents included coverage they or a family member received through an employer (50%), followed by Medicaid (16%) (Table 9).

One-quarter (25%) of respondents experienced a problem in the past year with their insurance related to being transgender, such as being denied coverage for care related to gender transition or being denied coverage for other kinds of health care because they were transgender.

### Experiences with Providers

Nearly one-third (32%) of respondents who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender. This included being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being

**Table 9: Type of health insurance or health coverage plan**

Health insurance source	% of Latino/a people in USTS	% in USTS	% in U.S. population (ACS)
Insurance through current or former employer or union (belonging to respondent or a family member)	50%	53%	56%
Medicaid	16%	13%	15%
Insurance they or someone else purchased directly from an insurance company or through a health insurance marketplace (such as healthcare.gov)	14%	14%	16%
Medicare	2%	5%	22%
VA	2%	2%	3%
TRICARE or other military health care	1%	2%	3%
Another type of insurance	6%	6%	---

physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.

In the past year, more than a quarter (26%) of respondents did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person, and 37% did not see a doctor when needed because they could not afford it.

### HIV Status

Fifty-four percent (54%) of Latino/a respondents had been tested for HIV, a rate similar to the USTS sample overall (55%) but higher than in the U.S. population (34%).<sup>23</sup> Among those who had not been tested, 83% of Latino/a respondents said that it was primarily because they were unlikely to have been exposed to HIV. Latino/a respondents who had not been tested were slightly less likely to cite this reason than USTS respondents overall (86%) and those in the general U.S. population (86%).<sup>24</sup>

Among Latino/a respondents, 1.6% reported that they were living with HIV, compared to the rate in the USTS sample overall (1.4%) and among white respondents (0.4%). This was more than five times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%)<sup>25</sup> and more than three times higher than the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (0.5%).<sup>26</sup> Transgender women (4.4%) were nearly three times more likely than Latino/a USTS respondents overall to be living with HIV (Figure 21) and respondents who did not complete high school (9.3%) were nearly six times more likely to be living with HIV (Figure 22). Additionally, 52% of Latino/a respondents were HIV negative, and 46% had not been tested or did not know the results of their HIV test.

### Psychological Distress

Forty-five percent (45%) of Latino/a respondents experienced serious psychological distress in the month before completing the survey (based on

#### 1.6% of Latino/a USTS respondents were living with HIV.

- **4X** higher than the rate among white USTS respondents (0.4%)
- **5X** higher than the rate in the U.S. population overall (0.3%)
- **3X** higher than the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (0.5%)

#### 4.4% of transgender Latinas were living with HIV, 15X the rate in the U.S. population (0.3%).

Figure 21: Living with HIV (by gender)

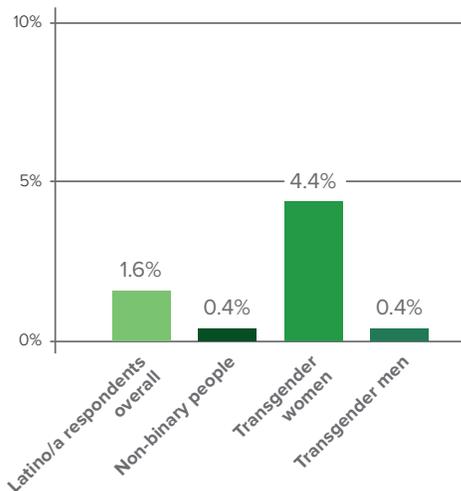
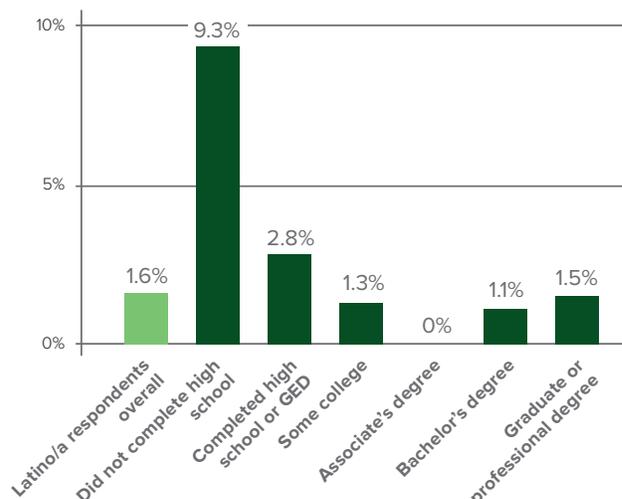


Figure 22: Living with HIV (by educational attainment)



the Kessler 6 Psychological Distress Scale),<sup>27</sup> nine times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (5%) and the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (5%).<sup>28</sup>

## Conversion Therapy

One in eight (12%) reported that a professional, such as a psychologist, counselor, or religious advisor, tried to stop them from being transgender.

## Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors

Nearly half (45%) of Latino/a respondents have attempted suicide at some point in their lives, compared to 40% in the USTS sample overall and 37% of white respondents. This rate was nearly ten

times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (4.6%).<sup>29</sup> Latino/a respondents with disabilities (60%) were substantially more likely to have attempted suicide in their lifetimes.

Nearly one in ten (9%) Latino/a respondents attempted suicide in the past year, compared to 7% in the USTS sample overall and 6% of white respondents. This rate was fifteen times higher than the rate in the U.S. population (0.6%) and the rate among Latino/a people in the U.S. population (0.6%).<sup>30</sup> Latino/a respondents with disabilities (14%) were more likely to have attempted suicide in the past year.

# Identity Documents

Only 10% of respondents reported that *all* of their identity documents (IDs) had the name and gender they preferred, while 71% reported that *none* of their IDs had the name and gender they preferred. The cost of changing IDs was one of the main barriers respondents faced, with 42% of those who have not changed their legal name and 38% of those who

have not updated the gender on their IDs reporting that it was because they could not afford it.

More than one-third (35%) of respondents who have shown an ID with a name or gender that did not match their gender presentation were verbally harassed, denied benefits or service, asked to leave, or assaulted.

# Experiences of Multiracial Latino/a Respondents

In addition to respondents who identified as Latino/a alone in the USTS, 549 respondents identified as multiracial and Latino/a or “a racial/ethnic identity not listed” and Latino/a. This section provides a brief overview of the experiences of these respondents, referred to here as multiracial Latino/a respondents. Additional research is needed to further examine the experiences of multiracial respondents.

- 21% of multiracial Latino/a respondents were unemployed.
- 50% were living in poverty.
- 23% of multiracial Latino/a respondents who have been employed reported losing a job at some point in their lives because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 34% of those who held or applied for a job during that year reported being fired, being denied a promotion, or not being hired for a job they applied for because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 17% were denied equal treatment or service in a public place and 57% were verbally harassed because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 12% were physically attacked because of being transgender and 15% were sexually assaulted. More than half (59%) have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives.
- In the past year, out of respondents who interacted with police or other law enforcement officers who thought or knew they were transgender, 78% experienced some form of mistreatment. This included being verbally harassed, repeatedly referred to as the wrong gender, physically assaulted, or sexually assaulted.
- 80% of those who were out or perceived as transgender at some point between Kindergarten and Grade 12 (K–12) experienced some form of mistreatment, such as being verbally harassed (58%), physically attacked (31%), or sexually assaulted (16%) in K–12 because of being transgender.

## Experiences of Multiracial Latino/a Respondents (continued)

- 42% of multiracial Latino/a respondents have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives.
- 20% experienced homelessness in the past year because of being transgender.
- In the past year, 29% of multiracial Latino/a respondents did not see a doctor when they needed to because of fear of being mistreated as a transgender person, and 43% did not see a doctor when needed because they could not afford it.
- 34% of those who saw a health care provider in the past year reported having at least one negative experience related to being transgender, such as being refused treatment, being verbally harassed, being physically or sexually assaulted, or having to teach the provider about transgender people in order to get appropriate care.

# Endnotes

1. James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., Mottet, L., & Anafi, M. (2016). *The Report of the U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality. Available at: [www.USTransSurvey.org](http://www.USTransSurvey.org).
2. Throughout this report, respondents who identified as Latino/a or Hispanic are referred to as Latino/a. For additional information about terminology and conventions used throughout the report, see the *Guide to Report and Terminology* chapter in the full USTS report. The findings for Latino/a respondents reflect the experiences of respondents who identified as Latino/a alone and do not include the experiences of those who identified as multiracial and Latino/a. Some findings for respondents who identified as multiracial and Latino/a are included on page 22 of this report.
3. The U.S. Census Bureau defines and asks about race and ethnicity separately, with ethnicity being categorized as “Hispanic or Latino” and “Not Hispanic or Latino.” U.S. Census Bureau surveys, such as the Decennial Census, American Community Survey, and Current Population Survey, first ask whether a respondent is of Hispanic or Latino origin to determine their ethnicity and then ask respondents their race. See e.g., U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). *Race and Ethnicity*. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/mso/www/training/pdf/race-ethnicity-onepager.pdf>. In contrast, USTS respondents received a question about their “racial/ethnic identity” and could select “Latino/a/Hispanic” as a racial/ethnic category. Therefore, comparisons to Latino/a people in the U.S. population presented throughout this report should be interpreted with caution.
4. The number of Latino/a respondents (n=1,473) is an unweighted value. All reported percentages are weighted to allow for comparison to the U.S. population when appropriate. Findings related to income, unemployment, and poverty are weighted differently than other reported percentages. For more information on the weighting procedures used to report 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey data, see the full survey report. Findings from statistical tests are not included in this report.
5. “Non-binary” is a term often used to describe people whose gender is not exclusively male or female, including those who identify with a gender other than male or female, as more than one gender, or as no gender.
6. Due to a low sample size, it was often not possible to include the experiences of crossdressers in gender-based comparisons in this report.
7. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: Sex by Age*. Available at: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_SPT\\_B01001&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_SPT_B01001&prodType=table).
8. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Survey 1-Year Estimates: Disability Characteristics*. Available at: [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_1YR\\_S1810&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S1810&prodType=table). Calculations were completed by the research team.
9. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Sex by Marital Status by Age for the Population 15 Years and Over (Hispanic or Latino)*. Available at: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_1YR\\_B12002&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_B12002&prodType=table). These findings include adults who are currently married and living with a spouse and those who are married but separated, based on the ACS definitions. See the full report for more information. The percentage of Latino/a people in the U.S. who are currently married and who have never been married include those who are 15 years of age and older, in contrast to the USTS sample, which includes respondents who are 18 and older. Therefore, the comparison to USTS Latino/a respondents should be interpreted with caution.
10. Latino/a respondents’ experiences of rejection also included being asked to meet with faith leaders or seek medical help to stop them from being transgender.
11. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—August 2015*. Available at: [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit\\_09042015.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_09042015.pdf); Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *The Employment Situation—September 2015*. Available at: [http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit\\_10022015.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/empsit_10022015.pdf).
12. The unemployment rate by race and ethnicity among adults in the U.S. population was calculated by the research team using CPS data available via the CPS Table Creator (<http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>). CPS Table Creator data utilizes data from the March 2015 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement, in which the overall U.S. unemployment rate was 5.5%. See the full USTS report for more information about unemployment rate calculations and interpretation.
13. “Living in poverty” means living at or near the poverty line. The research team calculated the USTS poverty measure using the official poverty measure, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. USTS respondents were designated as living in poverty if their total family income fell under 125% of the official U.S. poverty line. See the full report for more information about this calculation.
14. Proctor, B. D., Semega, J. L., & Kollar, M. A. (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. (p. 13). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf>.

15. Proctor, B. D., Semega, J. L., & Kollar, M. A. (2016). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*. (p. 55). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf>.
16. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Veteran Status*. Available at: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_1YR\\_S2101&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S2101&prodType=table).
17. U.S. Census Bureau (2014). *Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement*. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-01.2014.html>.
18. For each form of housing discrimination or instability listed, respondents could select “does not apply to me” if the housing situation could not have happened to them in the past year. For example, those who did not attempt to rent or buy a home in the past year could not have been denied a home or apartment, and were instructed to select “does not apply to me” for that question. The results for each form of discrimination or instability do not include those who answered “does not apply to me.”
19. Intimate partner violence involving coercive control included acts of intimidation, emotional and financial harm, and physical harm to others who were important to respondents.
20. Kaeble, D. & Glaze, L. (2016). *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2015*. (p. 4). Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at: <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus15.pdf>.
21. Beck, A. J., Berzofsky, M., Caspar, R., & Krebs, C. (2013). *Sexual Victimization in Prisons and Jails Reported by Inmates 2011–12*. DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics. Available at: <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/svpjri1112.pdf>. Rates of physical assault by facility staff was not available. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) presents data separately for people incarcerated in state and federal prisons and people incarcerated in jails, but they do not present data for those held in juvenile detention facilities. Data from the U.S. incarcerated population in this section is provided as a benchmark for experiences among USTS respondents and should be interpreted with caution. See full report for more information about this comparison.
22. U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates: Health Insurance Coverage Status by Age (Hispanic or Latino)*. Available at: [https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_15\\_1YR\\_B27001&prodType=table](https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_B27001&prodType=table).
23. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data*. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence>.
24. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *2015 National Health Interview Survey: Sample Adult File*. Available at: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis\\_2015\\_data\\_release.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/nhis_2015_data_release.htm).
25. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Diagnoses of HIV infections in the United States and dependent areas, 2015: Table 20b. *HIV Surveillance Report* (vol. 27). Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-report-2015-vol-27.pdf>. The HIV Surveillance Report provides data for those who were living with diagnosed HIV infection in the U.S. population in 2014. The U.S. population data includes those who are 15 years of age and older and does not include the rate for adults aged 18 and older alone, so it was not possible to exactly match the USTS sample with the U.S. population data. See the full report for more information on use of the U.S. population figure.
26. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Diagnoses of HIV infections in the United States and dependent areas, 2015: Table 20b. *HIV Surveillance Report* (vol. 27). Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/library/reports/surveillance/cdc-hiv-surveillance-report-2015-vol-27.pdf>. See also note 25.
27. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, or K6, uses a series of questions to assess psychological distress based on how often in the past 30 days respondents felt so sad that nothing could cheer them up, nervous, restless or fidgety, hopeless, that everything was an effort, or worthless. See the National Health Interview Survey for additional information about the K6 mental health screening instrument and measure of serious psychological distress in adults (available at: [http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Serious-psychological-distress-adults-percent\\_50055/Profile](http://www.healthindicators.gov/Indicators/Serious-psychological-distress-adults-percent_50055/Profile)).
28. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.87B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf>.
29. Kessler, R. C., Borges, G., & Walters, E. E. (1999). Prevalence of and risk factors for lifetime suicide attempts in the National Comorbidity Survey. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 56(7), 617–626.
30. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2016). *Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables*. Table 8.73B. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Available at: <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015/NSDUH-DetTabs-2015.pdf>.

# 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey: Report on the Experiences of Latino/a Respondents

by: Sandy E. James and Bamby Salcedo\*

October 2017



**The full report and Executive Summary of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey are available at [www.USTransSurvey.org](http://www.USTransSurvey.org).**

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